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Tuesday, 27 September 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Address by Mr. Carlos Roberto Reina Idiáquez, Constitutional President of the Republic of Honduras

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will first hear an address by the Constitutional President of the Republic of Honduras.

Mr. Carlos Roberto Reina Idiáquez, Constitutional President of the Republic of Honduras, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Constitutional President of the Republic of Honduras, His Excellency Mr. Carlos Roberto Reina Idiáquez, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Reina Idiáquez *(interpretation from Spanish)*: First of all, I am happy to express to you, Sir, my personal congratulations on your unanimous election to the responsible post of President of the General Assembly. We are all the more pleased because your human qualities and professional skills are certain to make a valuable contribution to the success of this session of the General Assembly and because you represent Côte d'Ivoire and Africa, a brother continent of Latin America, whose hopes and aspirations we share. Our thanks go as well to your distinguished predecessor, the representative of Guyana, Samuel Insanally, who so skilfully presided over the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

From this rostrum, the rostrum of world peace, which has seen a succession of the most notable representatives of all the nations, I address the peoples of the globe on behalf of 5.5 million Hondurans.

Honduras has emerged from the remarkable culture of the Mayas, who, in centuries past, invented the zero and developed mathematics, cultivated architecture, predicted eclipses, and produced an extraordinarily accurate calendar.

The ruins of Copán bear eloquent and beautiful testimony to the greatness of a civilization that strove to keep a written record of all that it did. Today, on the eve of the twenty-first century, we can barely decipher the wisdom contained in their petroglyphs. I am speaking, then, on behalf of a people whose roots go deep down into history, a people that after some centuries brought forth such world-class Central Americanists and pan-Americanists as Francisco Morazán and José Cecilio del Valle.

Like the Maya, the people of Honduras are deeply peace-loving, and their democratic calling has evolved unblemished. In the midst of the Central American war, Honduras remained at peace. None the less, it was not spared the harsh consequences of the great Central American crisis that devastated the region during the last two decades and from whose aftermath we still suffer.

Notwithstanding the many virtues of the Honduran people, we are still afflicted by economic, social, cultural

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and health problems that hamper development, obstruct the full exercise of human rights and immerse many families in dire poverty.

Exactly eight months ago today, I took on the leadership of the destiny of Honduras through the freely expressed will of our people. We are preparing the country for the titanic struggle against corruption, the hard battle against poverty and the fight against illiteracy, for stabilization of the economy and for conservation of the environment.

Peace and development require, above all, shelter, sustenance, land and jobs for all. They require universal justice, hope for everyone and promising prospects for every woman, man, girl and boy.

In the face of all the challenges of the present, we have opted to implement a moral revolution capable of straightening out the administration of the State and of transforming the country peacefully and democratically. The driving principles and values behind that moral revolution are larger than my people and Honduras's geographical dimensions. The moral revolution, behind which I throw myself wholeheartedly, permeates our links with other States and the international legal community.

The moral revolution means good government, economic growth with equity, transparency in the administration of the State and decency in the taking of important decisions and in daily work; it is political democracy, national identity, lush forests and healthy children; it is economics with a human face, the theory and practice of integration with the fraternal countries of Central America, international solidarity and support for the peaceful settlement of conflicts; it is, in short, a clear and resolute step towards mankind's next millennium.

On the global level we are witnessing the last rites of the cold war. We have seen the last of the after-effects of the Second World War, effects that lingered on into this decade. We are witnessing the globalization of markets and the resurgence of ethnic groups crying out for their own identity. We are seeing the unilateral actions of some States give way to multilateral operations framed by the legislation of this great world gathering. We see that colonialism has come crashing down like, in the words of our national anthem, a black-feathered bird, and that cooperation among free, sovereign and independent nations is growing day by day.

We are participants in the historic transformation of democracy from a national value into a universal one, from something practised intermittently in certain countries into a standard form of behaviour for States.

All this heralds a new dawn for mankind. But all these triumphs, however grand, are still not enough.

The differences between North and South necessitate a far-reaching dialogue in order that mankind may not be torn asunder yet again. International cooperation for peaceful development must take place soon and to a greater degree than that seen during times of war or conflict.

Central America is emerging, still licking its wounds, from the savage blows of two decades of deep crisis and bloodshed. A quarter of a million dead is the huge and tragic price that Central Americans paid for the cold war. Billions of dollars were poured into destruction and military confrontation between brothers. Now, unfortunately, only scant resources are being invested in building new democracies and new economies.

This is a challenge for Central Americans and the international community alike. Our region is replacing the agenda of war with that of peace and sustainable development. Our region - and in this respect my country is a trail-blazer - is bringing down the curtain on an era of confrontation and bringing it back up on one of unity and solidarity. In the era just past we had a lot of help; but for the one that is opening up we can see very little.

Although our own efforts are the engine of our development, international cooperation can strengthen us and speed up our progress. For this reason we call the attention of the international community to the fact that all those who contributed to our destruction have a moral obligation to cooperate in our reconstruction and to help undo the reversals the region suffered because of the two decades of crisis.

My Government and people view with profound optimism the positive turn of events that has taken place in the conduct of Governments. Louis XIV considered himself the State: "*L'état, c'est moi.*" Hegel envisaged the State as God's path towards the Earth, perfect reason which never errs. That led to the doctrine of *raison d'état* as the motivating force behind the conduct of Governments. Now, in the post-cold-war period, a new

motivating force is emerging: humanitarian reason. This change is symbolized by our passage not only from one century to the next, but, indeed, from one millennium to the next. It is, in effect, a thousand-year leap: from governmental policy based on the interests of the State to international relations inspired by humanitarian concerns.

In this period of radical transition for mankind, there are lights at the end of the tunnel: the collapse of various barriers, the weakening of racial segregation, the casting off of shackles that had kept different nationalities artificially bound together, the worldwide spread of democracy, and the emergence of *détente* as a feature of inter-State relations. These trends augur well for the building of a new world order based on peace, mutual support and broad tolerance. The growing realization that reason must prevail over force should prompt our national leaders to convert those rays of hope into great beacons for the maintenance of peace, security, democracy and, hence, sustainable development.

My country and people regard the development of the new international economic order with stoicism as the world becomes divided into blocs based on economic and strategic interests. The nation-State is suffering a crisis of identity and threats to its sovereignty. We are witnessing new geopolitical formations in which power is being transnationalized and the struggle for hegemony is passing into another dimension. The new structure of the world economy is marked by the supranational nature of decision-making in the field of finance and international trade.

If this emerging new international economic order is not managed prudently, if we do not infuse it with humanism and morality, we run the risk that in the short term the already-existing rift in the world between poor nations and rich nations - what we used to call the North and the South - will widen further. The following words of a Honduran poet speak eloquently to this: "The poor are so many that it is hard to forget them - so many that they could be the pallbearers of a celestial body."

It is vital to have a more equitable new international order. Now more than ever, justice in the South is a prerequisite for peace in the North. The industrialized States need to demonstrate their readiness to respond to the economic proposals of the developing countries, which represent two thirds of the Earth's people.

These thoughts should serve merely to stimulate our imagination in the quest for solutions to prevent the deterioration of our political, economic and social systems. In the process of globalization, under the banner of democracy in the political field and the market economy in the economic field, we have been making intense efforts at the regional and subregional levels to reduce political and economic differences among countries and regions on the basis of the norms and institutions that should guide our collective life towards a basic model, one fashioned in accordance with the principles that underpin this world Organization.

The United Nations must therefore pursue the analysis and discussion of the major issues that call for thorough reflection in this process of political, economic and social globalization. Indeed, there has been a marked increase in recourse to the United Nations as an instrument to prevent, avert or halt international conflicts, and in order to legitimize the right of intervention in the case of conflict between a State and its population or a State and the international community - but always in search of peace, freedom and democracy.

The manifest resolve of the States Members of this Organization to work in concert towards this objective has been remarkable and vigorous, but it should be borne in mind that good intentions are of little use unless supported by the political will to take the difficult decisions required by situations such as this. Let the apologists of violence and those who are nostalgic for power have no doubt that our political will to avert regional conflicts is unswerving, and that our political action is designed to promote stability, legitimacy and the development of effective democracies.

We share the concern and the distress at the events occurring in the sister country of Haiti. There is a pressing need to put an end to this grave situation, which is an affront to human dignity and to the self-determination of peoples. My Government supports a peaceful settlement of the problem and is ready, within its limitations, to take part in a United Nations peace-keeping mission once democracy is restored to that fraternal country.

Just as we felt great satisfaction at the signing, last year, of the historic mutual recognition agreement between the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), we are gratified by the decision of the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan to sign the Washington Declaration of 25 July 1994. It reflects the aspirations of the two peoples and Governments and seeks to find formulas for mutual understanding that will put an end to their substantial differences.

My Government was particularly pleased to see a bleak chapter of human history in South Africa end with the coming to office of a new Government led by President Nelson Mandela. Today we look forward to seeing the aspirations to freedom, peace, democracy and development whose fulfilment that great leader desires for his people become a reality.

Similarly, though with a sadness that I cannot conceal, I must say that events in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the tragedy of Rwanda cause us considerable distress and anguish. These fratricidal conflicts should impel us to act urgently to eliminate armed aggression, genocide and the practice of "ethnic cleansing" once and for all. We cannot continue to waver in implementing Security Council resolutions. Although this Organization has never played as big a leadership role as it is playing now, it is also true that compliance with its resolutions in the framework of operations to maintain international peace and security has been put into question.

My Government deeply regrets the resulting tragic events that have claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and caused a massive exodus of refugees. We therefore urge parties in conflict to act in a spirit of reconciliation, certain that the international community will continue to extend humanitarian assistance to them.

In the case of Cuba, the Government of Honduras agrees with the overall objective of restoring democracy to that country, in the framework of the inter-American system. However, we believe that the policy pursued by the Government of the United States of America is not consistent with the need to remedy the critical political, economic and social conditions prevailing in that brotherly country, and we sincerely hope that dialogue between the parties will prevail in this dispute.

The countries of the Central American region have continued to pursue policies based on resolutions adopted at presidential Summits, with a view to creating a new economic, social and political structure for the benefit of Central Americans. In this regard, at the recent fifteenth meeting of Central American Presidents, held in the brotherly Republic of Costa Rica, new circumstances prompted us to adopt an integral strategy for sustainable development in the region, a national and regional strategy which we call the "Alliance for Sustainable Development". This is a Central American initiative in the political, moral, economic, social and ecological fields, whose agenda will be further enriched with the holding of the environmental Summit in Managua, Nicaragua, on 12 and 13 October, and the International Conference for Peace and Development in Central America, to be held on 24 and 25 October this year in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The International Conference will be a good opportunity for the international community, as it did a decade ago in the midst of a tragic confrontation, to express its solidarity with a region that has turned war into reconciliation, conflict into human progress and totalitarianism into democracy. It would be terrible indeed if the world that extended its hand to us in those difficult times were to fail now to help us enjoy the dividends of peace.

We participated with similar enthusiasm and optimism in the Fourth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government in Cartagena de Indias, Republic of Colombia. As everyone present knows, there was broad discussion there of aspects of trade and integration as elements in Ibero-American development. We attended that important meeting with the political resolve to tackle the problems that are besetting our countries and causing dangerous economic and social imbalances, thus requiring a search for concerted responses that will enable us to develop machinery to tackle the challenges of the future more effectively.

In accordance with this commitment, my Government believes that, although dialogue has been strengthened, it is even more important to pursue the policies adopted at that forum. In this context, we reaffirm our fullest support for the joint initiatives, which are based on the principles of representative democracy, the defence and promotion of human rights, respect for sovereignty and the principles of non-intervention and the self-determination of peoples.

On a different tack, I should like to inform this world forum that the degradation of the environment is a matter of constant concern to us. In this regard, my Government attaches the highest priority to the search for a solution to this problem. Mechanisms have been established to implement the resolutions adopted at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992.

We reaffirm our commitment to promoting a balanced and integrated approach to sustainable development, as set forth in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. It is important that the Assembly expand on that idea and build an awareness of the world's environmental unity so that a new relationship between mankind and nature can emerge.

allowing us to work together for its conservation and survival.

Regarding this sensitive matter, our National Congress is currently seized with the Conventions on Biological Diversity and on Climate Change, with a view to translating our words into deeds through their speedy debate and adoption.

My Government wishes to raise one other issue today, with a sense of full responsibility and an awareness of the gravity of the effects of the crisis faced by developing countries and the risks involved for the stability of the world economy. We must acknowledge the importance of the signing of the Final Act of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, as well as the agreement creating the World Trade Organization, with a view to strengthening the multilateral trade system. We trust that these instruments will help to ensure the liberalization and expansion of international trade for the benefit of the developing countries.

But if in pursuing this goal the industrialized nations do not act in accordance with the changes taking place in international economic relations, efforts within the framework of South-South cooperation will have to be stepped up. This is becoming not merely an alternative, but a fundamental challenge to our capacity to act in these negotiations, which can stem only from the coordination and support that impart resolution, continuity and effectiveness to the actions of the group of developing countries.

In the context of what the United Nations means to all of us, my Government has attached the greatest importance to and has followed with great interest the process of reform of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly with respect to the Security Council.

In the prevailing international circumstances and given the role the Security Council has been called upon to play in the maintenance of international peace and security, the reforms that the membership is calling for, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Organization, should be studied thoroughly and adopted with meticulous care.

Any reform in the membership of the Security Council needs to take into account the criteria established in the relevant Articles of the Charter. It is essential to respect the principle of equitable geographical representation, which would permit us to increase the number of permanent and non-permanent members democratically and to consider whether or not it would be desirable to create a new category - that of semi-permanent member - as has been suggested in the open-ended working group on the restructuring of the Security Council established by the Secretary-General.

In this process of change, in addition to the principles that I have outlined we need to consider what basic indicators would enable us to set the number of members at the right level. This is also true of the study on the veto right, currently enjoyed by the five permanent members; my Government feels that this right should not be granted to any category, whether permanent or semi-permanent. Thus, Honduras is not opposed to the establishment of new categories provided this is done in accordance with the principle of the sovereign equality of States and equitable geographical distribution.

With faith in God, in truth and in justice, I shall now return to my country to continue building the society we have chosen and contributing to the attainment of the kind of world to which we all aspire. May everything work to the good of mankind.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Constitutional President of the Republic of Honduras for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Carlos Roberto Reina Idiáquez, Constitutional President of the Republic of Honduras, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Luis Alberto Lacalle, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

Mr. Luis Alberto Lacalle, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, His Excellency Mr. Luis Alberto Lacalle, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Lacalle *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. I feel sure that with your experience you will guide this session to a successful conclusion.

In my capacity as President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, elected by the free vote of our citizens, I have the great honour of addressing the General Assembly.

My country has been linked to the United Nations since the very moment of its creation. It not only has kept a legal and formal link with the Organization but has become an active participant in its political and social activities.

As the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations approaches, this is an appropriate opportunity to undertake a critical analysis of the Organization itself and to analyse the world situation following the crucial events of the last few years.

The consequences of the end of the bipolar are and the cold war still affect the life of all nations. Although it has been stated that there is now a new world order, this is contradicted daily by events that occur in all parts of the world. We can say that the old order no longer exists and we can also say that the world is currently undergoing a process of complete reordering.

We cannot yet see the end of that process, but there are a number of different actors, of various origins. Super-Powers and nations are no longer the only influences at play in the international arena. Today, we can discern new centres of power that have an unquestionable influence on international life. I would refer - and the list is far from complete - to the mass-communications media that standardize and transmit opinions throughout the planet, thereby becoming guidelines that form opinion and actions and exert an undeniable influence.

Similarly, we could mention the re-emergence of politically militant religious movements, both domestic and international, which use philosophical currents to create genuine political leverage. Although economic interests have, since the beginning of mankind's history, always been factors in the power equation, market regionalization has today strengthened the power of economic and financial elements which, in America, Europe and Asia, are emerging as the main protagonists of national life.

Of course, in this analysis we cannot fail to mention the crucial and significant role played by international organizations, particularly our own Organization, the United Nations.

Painful experience has taught us how far mankind still is from successfully expanding international law in relations among countries. We are currently living in the aftermath of the reordering process I have mentioned, and the redistribution and relocation of the world's centres of power.

As part of this process, collective security mechanisms must be thoroughly analysed. Several States have called for review of United Nations institutions, but we must approach that task very carefully, for our progress will be meagre indeed if we confine ourselves to agreeing that the new role of the United Nations should be simply to reflect the new distribution of power that results from the new world order. We believe, pursuant to the Charter, that the main issue of international peace-keeping and security is to be found in the extent to which international society is able to guarantee full and comprehensive observance of all of the Charter principles.

Here, emphasis should be placed on distinguishing between reforms of the institutional mechanisms designed to implement collective security and the integrity of the principles of international conduct, observance of which is the very foundation of this society.

It is indeed appropriate to enunciate these principles: prohibition of the use of force against the territorial integrity and the independence of States; equality of rights and free self-determination; the duty of non-intervention in internal affairs - a principle that is clearly of Latin American origin; the sovereign equality of States; the peaceful settlement of disputes and good-faith cooperation among nations. This is not a set of abstract measures or postulates that are overtaken by the present global context. These principles form the essence of international conduct for all States, the practical, direct and unavoidable end product of international relations.

Full, comprehensive and continuing respect for these principles will determine whether or not the international security and stability the world so needs is achieved and can be maintained, particularly in this era of such great change. Speaking realistically, they could be rated as possibilities that could, were they realized, lead to hoped-

for, feasible and compelling results. Thus, the creation, establishment and maintenance of a climate and atmosphere of international security are responsibilities that are incumbent mainly on those States with the greatest power and the greatest decision-making capacity in the international order, although other States bear equal responsibilities in this respect.

These principles are part of a whole, and they must not yield to possible distortions, one of which calls for change on the grounds that the world context has changed, leading to the justification of intervention on humanitarian grounds, and another of which is embodied in the temptation to exaggerate some of these principles to the detriment of others, for example invoking self-determination as a pretext for violating the territorial integrity or national borders of other States.

Speaking in the Security Council on 4 May 1965, my compatriot, Ambassador Carlos Maria Velasquez, stated with perfect clarity:

> "As I said only a short time ago in this very chamber on assuming the office of representative of Uruguay on the Security Council, my country has long realized from its own historical experience, which has been no less unhappy than that of other Latin American countries, that the world must be governed by real respect for the rules of international law and morality. Without this, harsh reasons of state will continue to be the predominant factor in international relations and the fate of small countries will remain precarious and uncertain.
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> "Our attitude is not what some realistic minds might describe as one of sanctimonious legality. There are very real grounds - and the case we are now considering is an example - for the small countries' belief that strict and faithful application of juridical provisions governing what is termed security under law represents one of the corner-stones of our own security."
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> "If I may say so, the great Powers can give such interpretation to texts as they see fit because if, in fact, political decisions are to be based on will rather than on reason, it is they who have the power to dictate them. We smaller nations need to adhere unswervingly to the rule of law. In our own national interest, we need to know how far we can go and, perhaps more important still, the extent to which we can be compelled." *(Official Records of the Security Council, Twentieth Year, 1198th meeting, paras. 33 and 34)*

In this ever-changing world, diverse threats and tensions are multiplying, even in those regions where peace and security would seem to be firmly established.

It therefore seems urgent that the international community effectively show that its commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter is not a mere formal commitment or a passive expression of hope.

It is indeed deplorable to see that from one session of the Assembly to the next new confrontations continue to occur in various parts of the world, leaving their tragic aftermaths of death and grief. This sad reality means, as noted in the document submitted by the Secretary-General, "An Agenda for Peace", which clearly emphasizes the unavoidable responsibility of each and every one of us in this area, priority must be given to the work of the United Nations.

Caught up as we are in a vicious circle of distrust, civilized and fruitful coexistence will be possible only to the extent that States carry out their actions in their particular areas of interest in accordance with the international legal order and in strict accordance with the obligations incumbent upon them under the United Nations Charter.

Accordingly, Uruguay, in a constructive spirit, has participated actively in various peace-keeping operations in response to the needs of the international community. Our participation has been based on a number of fundamental principles that govern our foreign policy, namely, non-intervention in internal affairs, peaceful settlement of disputes, self-determination of peoples, and non-use of force to achieve peace.

Our assessment is that, in general, peace-keeping operations have shown positive progress in the settlement of conflicts, although several operational matters still have to be improved and resolved.

First, we believe that peace-keeping operations must be carried out in full compliance with the principles of international law as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In this sense, and on the basis of our experience, we believe that actions under Chapter VII of the Charter or operations with a broad mandate should be undertaken only as a last resort, after the political means

described in Chapter VI of the Charter have been exhausted.

Furthermore, we believe that action of this type can be undertaken only when there are, clearly, emergency situations that pose a real threat to international peace and security. In addition, we have to bear in mind the views of regional organizations and those of neighbouring countries in the areas of conflict.

On the other hand, peace-keeping operations must have a feasible and precise mandate, as well as a realistic schedule. Security Council decisions to send a mission should not take account of the strategic or political importance of the different regions and, thereby, simply highlight differences that should not affect this type of decision.

Uruguay has participated, and will continue to participate actively, in activities of this kind. We are currently taking part in seven operations - in India/Pakistan, Mozambique, Iraq/Kuwait, Western Sahara, Liberia, Rwanda and Georgia. Overall, more than 950 persons are involved. Given the relatively small number of people in our armed forces, these figures represent a high degree of commitment, hardly matched in the international community.

Our country provides contingents for peace-keeping operations in the belief that we are contributing in a spirit of solidarity to the attainment of a collective goal that transcends exclusively national interests. We believe that we have a right to declare that such solidarity must also be manifested by other members of the international community in support of this effort.

Despite its effort and the degree of its commitment, however, Uruguay does not see a similar return from the international community. It has not received compensation deriving from the depreciation of equipment and materials and from the contribution of contingents, which often pay with their lives for their commitment to the international cause.

We support the various efforts with a view to adjusting the Charter of the United Nations to the changes in the international situation - in particular, those referred to in General Assembly resolution 47/60.

Reform of the Charter must be effected within the framework of the need to attain greater democratization and transparency in decision-making, and to strike a balance between the existing Powers of the different bodies.

Uruguay favours an increase in the number of members of the Security Council to make it more representative and to facilitate the fulfilment of its tasks. Here, the main challenge is to prevent an increase in the membership of the Security Council from compromising its efficiency. Uruguay favours a minimum of 20 members and a maximum of 25. Uruguay does not oppose the inclusion of new categories of members - semi-permanent, for example - under the principle of equitable geographical distribution, so long as this would provide for more appropriate representativeness and equal operational opportunity. Nevertheless, we understand that such an innovation must be based on the idea that "more privileges entail more obligations", including financial obligations.

New members should be elected for fixed terms to represent the various regions, and they should have a mandate encompassing regional interests. We would accept their re-election provided that the members in question had the support of the States in their own regions.

There are certain legal matters affecting the Organization that deserve our attention. In this connection, I should like to refer first to the situation provided for in Article 50 of the Charter, which affects us directly. Reality has shown the need for a mechanism to ensure reparation for third States that are economically affected by the application of sanctions imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter. In our opinion, such a mechanism should be permanent and should operate automatically.

Secondly, we must pay more attention to the question of responsibility for attacks on United Nations and associated personnel, given the ominous increase in the number of such attacks. This is a situation with which our country is very familiar.

The problems facing the international community today include issues of a global nature affecting all Members of the United Nations, as well as other temporary issues which concern one or more individual States but which may have implications for the rest of the international community.

We shall refer to both, beginning with those of a global nature: international terrorism, international cooperation against crime, and human rights.

Acts of international terrorism are serious common-law crimes, which violate the most elemental principles of individual and collective security, irrespective of the political excuses invoked for their perpetration. They are a flagrant violation of human rights and must be fought, domestically and internationally, with efficient and energetic measures.

Uruguay is aware of the various efforts in different international forums, but we are concerned about the lack of practical, concrete and global action to deal effectively with this serious and complex problem. Although the maintenance of internal order and security is the responsibility of each State, cooperation between countries is essential to coordinated prevention and punishment of crimes that have international implications.

These mechanisms could include full respect for the norms of extradition in accordance with the law, which are the tangible expression of the political will of States to cooperate in the preservation of the legal rights protected by international agreements and by domestic legislation.

Among the many rights for the protection of which we are directly responsible are the human rights of the child. In this very building, in 1990, we held what was described as the World Summit for Children. On that occasion we adopted an extensive document intended to set the guidelines for highly ethical action, through which nations undertook to protect the future of mankind - our children. This document included pragmatic issues such as the protection of children in situations of armed conflict and the adoption of appropriate measures to protect them.

The conflict afflicting the Balkans has given rise to episodes that disturb the conscience of mankind. The consequences have been particularly atrocious for the children in the region - innocent victims of an immoral conflict. We have brought this case to the attention of the relevant agencies. We considered that under the Convention on the Rights of the Child there was a case for seeking a truce to allow for the evacuation of children from battlefront areas. Unfortunately, nobody got beyond written words, and our Organization was not able to prevent even this aspect of the barbarism prevailing in that area.

In the same spirit, it is necessary that our Organization fully enforce this Assembly's resolution establishing the need for effective action against the sexual exploitation of children in order to prevent and eliminate such abuse.

Uruguay is aware of the need to preserve the quality of the physical and human environment and of the dangers arising from the degradation of natural resources. This is why it has adopted the programmes in Agenda 21 of the United Nations. Our National Parliament enacted a law granting priority to the protection of the environment against any form of depredation, destruction or pollution and making environmental impact assessments mandatory.

As a State located in the Southern Cone of the American continent, our country has a particular interest in all issues relating to climate changes that affect us. At the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee, as a contribution to the research on this topic, Uruguay offered to host the permanent headquarters of the secretariat of the Convention on Climate Change.

All these actions and initiatives have been taken in the framework of the strategy - which my country shares - to promote lasting economic and social development without prejudice to the environment or to non-renewable resources, thus achieving solid and sustained growth for both the present and future generations.

The work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the social field has earned a well-deserved recognition. The present times call for a more crucial role by the United Nations system and for the broadening of activities to meet the new challenges, for example, the growing imbalance between the wealthy countries and the two thirds of mankind who live in poverty.

It is urgent that we check deteriorating social conditions in the developing world, so as to prevent these situations from becoming threats to international peace and security. Accordingly, Uruguay enthusiastically supports the convening of the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen in March 1995. This event will provide an opportunity to discuss global strategies for strengthening international cooperation for both wealthy and developing countries.

Our country is deeply concerned about the continuing deterioration of the world economy, which

seems to be accelerating day by day. The persistence of recession and inflation, the rise in unemployment, the instability in foreign exchange markets, the disorder in the balances of payments in industrialized regions, the recurring protectionist currents that continuously depart from GATT rules - all this inevitably delays economic progress in the developing countries, the majority of the States gathered here.

Free trade is still one of the bases on which to achieve and to strengthen development processes; it is therefore important that we have been able to conclude the so-called Uruguay Round of GATT - but this can only be seen as the end of one stage. Although in principle the results can be described as encouraging, they will be meaningless unless free trade is broadened in the future. That is why the various agreements reached must be complemented by further reducing support and subsidy levels and by eliminating non-tariff obstacles to trade.

There is no doubt that the tasks to be undertaken by the World Trade Organization will be of critical importance in strengthening the process of free trade. Therefore, prompt ratification of the Marrakech Agreements by all countries is necessary in order to allow this new organization to begin operations on 1 January next year.

In the context of reorganizing current international trade relations, Uruguay firmly supports the Secretary-General's initiative in his report, "Agenda for Development", which is a positive contribution in the search for a revitalized approach to the concept of development, as it includes the objectives of peace, freedom, justice and progress.

Before I turn to items on particular situations, let me take up one last global topic, that relating to progress in international law, an area dear to my country, which is a fervent advocate and a jealous guardian of its application.

We are convinced of the need to promote the evolution of international law as the most effective tool to govern relations among States. We wish to affirm our support for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 44/23, the objective of which is to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and to achieve compliance with the decisions of the International Court of Justice, while encouraging the codification of international law, a goal our country has long desired.

In addition, we are pleased to see the entry into force of the Convention of the Law of the Sea - which was ratified by our country - and we are hopeful that some States will be able to overcome their difficulties with certain points and accede to the Convention, thus achieving its full acceptance.

In conclusion, I would like to refer to three international situations in which my country has a particular interest, as their outcome may have consequences at the international level and affect the credibility so necessary to our Organization at this time of restructuring and revitalization.

First of all, my country wishes expressly to mention the situation in the Middle East, given our traditional bonds with many of the States of the region. We have always been concerned with the various approaches to achieving peace in the Middle East. In this connection we recall Uruguay's co-sponsorship of the repeal of resolution 3379 (XXX), which illogically and unjustly determined that Zionism was a form of racism.

Uruguay has always supported all actions, in accordance with international law and with the resolutions of the Security Council, aimed at achieving peace through the negotiation of agreements among the parties involved, as the only valid alternative allowing the parties the possibility of living within safe and recognized borders.

We have recently witnessed an acceleration of these negotiations, with considerable progress in the achievement of border agreements, the opening of air communications and the recognition of the State of Israel. At the same time, however, we note with concern the recurrence of terrorist attacks aimed at crippling this process - the final goal of which is desired by the overwhelming majority of the international community: the achievement of permanent peace in that region.

We understand that this session of the Assembly can be instrumental in furthering progress in the peace process, by the Organization's adoption of a realistic and up-to-date position on the current negotiations, modifying the contents and style of General Assembly resolutions in keeping with this new stage.

We in the American hemisphere believe that the Cuban situation must be seen in the light of two considerations: on the one hand, the view - shared by our country - that pluralist and representative democracy and the protection of human rights must be fully consolidated in our continent without any exceptions; and, on the other, the perspective of respect for the

principles of the United Nations Charter regarding non-intervention and the self-determination of peoples.

Observance of these precepts and of general international law implies the adoption of unambiguous criteria regarding the economic, commercial and financial blockade of Cuba. In this sense, our country, true to its consistent policy, will support the resolution that establishes the need to eliminate the unilateral application for political purposes of economic and commercial measures against another State - without, however, any implications of recognition or acceptance of the type of regime prevailing in that country.

Lastly, the position of Uruguay on the crisis in Haiti is well known. Our country has invariably opposed any kind of military intervention lacking the necessary legal support. Under the Charter of the Organization, the use of force is limited to cases in which the community is confronted with a clear threat to international peace and security.

Regardless of the dynamics of events, we still believe that political instances and dialogue are the best instrument for preserving the principles of international law and settling situations of this nature.

International, and particularly hemispheric, relations must take place against a backdrop of realism and legal security: realism to adjust to ongoing change in the internal and external aspects of each country; and legal security to find in law the criteria of equity and justice that make the principle of the sovereign equality of States feasible and credible.

May the upcoming commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations be an opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved and - as was so well said by the Secretary-General - to learn the lessons of the past as a challenge for the achievement of future goals.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Luis Alberto Lacalle, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Carlos Saúl Menem, President of the Argentine Republic

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Argentine Republic.

Mr. Carlos Saúl Menem, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Argentine Republic, His Excellency Mr. Carlos Saúl Menem, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Menem *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your election to such a responsible post. I am certain that you will be able to guide our debates with your well-known efficiency.

These are years of change and transformation. In an amazingly short period of time we have moved from a bipolar world marked by strategic confrontation which seemed insurmountable to a world in which the hope of an international order of peace and harmony coexists with some uncertainties. There are still serious conflicts that require our full attention and that of the United Nations - the main institution the international community has for the solution of such conflicts.

The international landscape is full of contrasts: there are encouraging signs of convergence alongside other signs that seem to point to the persistence of authoritarianism and extremism, which inevitably lead to violence. Torn as it is between hope and uncertainty, the world must face the challenge of finding the right answers. But we must keep in mind and never lose sight of the fact that we cannot aspire to a world at peace if we fail to establish a just international society. There can be no peace without justice and there can be no justice without the full assurance of freedom and human rights.

There can be no peace or justice if there is discrimination. There can be no peace or justice where there is hunger. There can be no peace or justice where there are regimes that repress individual freedom. And there can be no peace or justice when terrorism continues to be protected by political, cultural and economic sponsors.

But, as I said at the outset, there are also some facets of reality that encourage us. One of the high notes of the past year was the successful conclusion of the institutional transition of the Republic of South Africa, magnificently embodied in the figures of President Mandela and the enlightened opposition leaders. The national unity agreements which made it possible for South Africa to be successfully integrated into the family of democratic nations demonstrate once again that the endeavour of nation-building must always be based on dialogue and understanding between major political forces.

We have also witnessed with satisfaction and hope the continuation and the strengthening of the peace agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. In Gaza and Jericho, after more than 30 years, the Palestinian people is once again determining its own future in its own land.

The original agreements have been strengthened by those recently signed by Israel and Jordan, which unequivocally represent the definitive acceptance of the State of Israel by the whole of the international community. We hope that such a promising start will soon lead to similar agreements with other, indispensable actors in the region.

As at all great moments in history, the solution to the violence and despair that lasted for so many years has not been a matter of chance. Involved here have been men, great statesmen, true leaders, who - without setting aside their own legitimate grievances - have decided courageously to do away with rancour and recrimination. These Israeli and Palestinian leaders have pointed the way to reconciliation founded on peace.

But not all is brightness. The shadows of the Balkan tragedy linger, despite the tremendous efforts being made by the United Nations and regional groups to find a just and satisfactory peace. Argentina has contributed to this quest for solutions to the best of its ability, through the United Nations Protection Force. Since 1992 more than 4,000 Argentine soldiers have been dispatched to contribute, sometimes even with their lives, to fulfilling the resolutions of the Organization.

In Africa, Rwanda has demanded the attention and gripped the hearts of all men and women of goodwill. Argentina has contributed by sending foodstuffs and medical supplies, and doctors and nurses from our country have joined in the efforts of thousands of international volunteers who, amid scenes of horror and destitution, remind us of the inner nobility of every human being.

In Latin America, our region, to which we attach the greatest importance, the process of consolidating democracy has continued. Significant steps have been taken in terms of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and it is now possible, as in few regions of the world, to point to high levels of growth in an atmosphere of increasing economic stability. Our region, with its renewed democratic outlook, its respect for human rights, for peace and progressive but resolute integration, has in a few years become the centre of attraction for international investment. In this framework of increasing freedom that the region now demonstrates, I should like particularly to hail the historic process of elections in El Salvador, which has put behind it a long period of confrontation.

With respect to the situation in Cuba, my Government would once again voice its conviction as to the need for democratization on a pluralistic basis as the only way to prevent the worsening of the crisis that exists there and to permit the country to be reintegrated fully into the Latin American community.

In Haiti, the overall solution lies in compliance with Security Council resolution 940 (1994), which, within the system of collective security provided for in the Charter, authorizes multilateral action, a mechanism that is essentially different in nature from unilateral intervention, which we reject.

I wish to take this opportunity to express thanks for the work done by Mr. Dante Caputo, the former Foreign Minister of my country, who, after completing important and intelligent work during his term as Representative of the Secretary-General for the question of Haiti, decided just a few days ago to resign that position.

I believe in this regard that it is important to refer to one of the most disquieting challenges that threaten democracy: corruption. This phenomenon progressively erodes credibility and public trust in institutions and their leaders. The Argentine Government is committed to a relentless struggle against corruption, placing particular emphasis on eliminating excessive State control and a lack of transparency in State administration, a fertile ground for corruption.

The problems that make up the international agenda must, in Argentina's view, be solved by strengthening the

United Nations. We have constantly and firmly supported the work of the Security Council, which is at last on the way to regaining the role assigned to it by the Charter. The participation of Argentina in nine peace-keeping operations - the highest number for any Latin American country - in the form of troops, military observers and civilian police, is a concrete contribution that bears out the convictions that I have spoken of today.

I wish to emphasize that in its participation in peace-keeping operations, the Argentine Republic is accompanied by 72 countries. I wish to pay tribute to them as well for assisting in achieving peace and justice in many, very diverse, regions of the world.

We have also responded to the Secretary-General's proposal that a system of stand-by forces be set up, and our response takes the form of a pledge of specialized personnel, transport and 1,500 troops.

Another aspect of far-reaching importance in terms of the evolution of the United Nations itself is the question of equitable representation on the Security Council and an increase in the number of its members. Argentina attaches great importance to this issue and takes the view that the number of members on the Council has always corresponded to the geopolitical situation prevailing at a specific time and that efforts at reform should thus be designed to adapt the number to the current geopolitical situation.

Combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is one of the indisputable pillars of international peace and security.

With this in mind, Argentina has ratified the Treaty of Tlatelolco, while currently our Parliament is considering accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which should be extended for the sake of global security and stability.

With respect to chemical weapons, we are taking the necessary steps to set up a national authority, and we hope to see international verification measures strengthened.

At the same time, we firmly support the conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty.

In the past year, Argentina joined the systems controlling exports of high technology and equipment with possible military uses, enabling us to benefit from the transfer of technology.

We are concerned at the persistence of the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas.

Although we have a satisfactory relationship with the United Kingdom on other bilateral questions, we cannot help but once again reaffirm before this world forum, as we do each year, our sovereign rights over those territories.

Our claim this year has taken on special significance, since the Argentine people, through their representatives in the National Congress, reformed the supreme law of the country little more than a month ago, giving constitutional status to the question of the Malvinas Islands by including, in the new text of the constitution, a transitional clause which reaffirms our rights and states that in recovering those rights respect for international law and the way of life of the population of the Islands shall be paramount.

Thus the entire spectrum of Argentine political opinion has given solemn embodiment to a claim which is more than ever central and permanent to our foreign policy.

For this reason, and despite the fact that our two Governments have collaborated on certain aspects of the management of the living resources of the South Atlantic, we cannot but deplore the further recourse by the United Kingdom to unilateral jurisdictional measures in the area; these undermine the possibility of broadening existing agreements and of arriving at others. We trust that the United Kingdom shares with us the conviction that there is no real alternative to cooperation in the South Atlantic.

With respect to fisheries, we have arrived at provisional agreements allowing for the rational exploitation of these resources and preventing predatory fishing. But repeated recourse to unilateral measures such as I have described jeopardizes the possibility of adding to or indeed maintaining these understandings.

As far as oil is concerned, Argentina has once again put forward specific proposals for cooperation. Our initiatives on this matter are based on the recognized principle of international law prohibiting the unilateral exploitation of non-renewable resources, a dispute which has been acknowledged by the General Assembly.

As to the inhabitants of the islands, I wish to reaffirm before this Assembly our full readiness to establish direct and responsive links with them. It is clear to us that the problem of the Falkland Islands has an inevitable human dimension which is bound up with the way of life and the needs of the islanders.

Argentina is ready to preserve the way of life and the particular characteristics, and in this context we are prepared to study all matters, from communications to the legal and financial systems, in order to find logical solutions acceptable to all.

Dialogue with the islanders is an inseparable part of a rational, civilized solution to this problem. Once again, logic and reason are pointing inexorably towards cooperation and dialogue.

The economic and social agenda is an indication of just how positive an event was the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT); it will make it possible to more effectively tackle problems of unemployment and the distribution of wealth.

Argentina's policy aims at securing the consensus of the countries of the Americas in order that we may declare the continent a zone free of subsidies and unfair practices with respect to agricultural products. The agreement on agriculture marks an important advancement, and Argentina thinks it is appropriate to take a further step by helping to eliminate distortions in international trade.

Argentina's concern for social problems is well known. Through measures to establish stability, to combat inflation and to ensure economic growth, we have taken an important step forward in our struggle against poverty.

Turning to external matters, we have proposed the establishment of a volunteer corps to combat hunger and poverty, coordinating efforts under way in this field. President Clinton kindly referred to our initiative yesterday, and we particularly value his support.

The issues related to the relationship between population and development, which a few weeks ago were absorbing world attention in Cairo, cannot be left out of this analysis. We believe in promoting fundamental values, such as the advancement of women, human rights, and sustainable economic development, but with respect to population policies we maintain that human life exists from the moment of conception until natural death, condemning any practice undermining this.

Population policies should not aim to smother life, but to ensure the greatest access of all individuals to the benefits of development and the fair distribution of wealth.

There are two scourges besetting the world at the end of the twentieth century: drug trafficking and terrorism. Both of these call for concerted action on the part of the international community, for they are not national but world-wide scourges.

With respect to terrorism, I can speak with the twofold weight of conviction and pain - with conviction, because of our repudiation of terrorism as a means of political or religious expression, and with pain, because of the hundreds of Argentines who died as a result of the attack that destroyed a building belonging to the Jewish community in Buenos Aires in July. We are grateful for the solidarity extended to us and for the Security Council's condemnation. We believe that concerted action is needed to tackle terrorism - terrorism which has erupted in New York, London and Panama as well as in Buenos Aires. It is vital for the United Nations to play a more active, leadership role, coordinating a global endeavour to effectively combat this scourge.

We reiterate here our suggestion that the United Nations should be provided with a unit devoted to the question of international terrorism.

United Nations action must enjoy the resolute support of all. It is iniquitous and unacceptable that there are Governments that encourage terrorism. Sovereignty must not be used as a shield for abetting terrorist organizations while the world looks on helplessly. If we Heads of State all worked in concert, we could put an end to this veritable scourge afflicting us all.

The United Nations should also study multilateral mechanisms that, while respecting the immunities and privileges enshrined in the Vienna Convention, would prevent and punish the abuse of those immunities and privileges to support the actions of international terrorists. We cannot rule out the possibility that such immunities and privileges were abused in the attacks in Buenos Aires.

In closing, I wish to address the need to strengthen the United Nations, in particular with respect to its

responsibilities in the area of international peace and security. This involves first resolving its pressing financial difficulties.

The United Nations must also continue to study the possibility of changing the current structure of the Security Council. In the view of the Argentine Republic, any increase in the number of members should be prudent and moderate, so that the Council is guaranteed maximum possible operating efficiency. In addition, any expansion should avoid the creation of unjustifiable imbalances in the representation of the various regions of the world. The Argentine Republic believes that the principle of the sovereign equality of Member States must always be respected. Furthermore, none of the provisions of Article 23 of the Charter should be disregarded. For all these reasons, it would seem preferable to think in terms of a limited increase in the number of non-permanent members and, as far as possible, the elimination of restrictions on their re-election.

We find ourselves on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization. Let us make the best use of the system of collective security and the mechanisms of economic and social cooperation provided by the Charter. I have no doubt that by doing so we shall have a much better world in the next 50 years, one worth living in for our children and our children's children.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Argentine Republic for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Carlos Saúl Menem, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

General debate

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The next speaker is the Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, His Excellency Mr. Klaus Kinkel.

Mr. Kinkel (Germany) *(spoke in German; English text furnished by the delegation)*: First, I should like to offer you, Sir, my personal congratulations on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session, and also those of the European Union, on whose behalf I am addressing the Assembly today. We wish you luck and success in your high office.

We thank Ambassador Insanally for the wise leadership with which he guided the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly to a successful conclusion.

I am addressing the Assembly on behalf of a Europe that has become more closely integrated as a result of the Maastricht Treaty, a Europe which in a few weeks' time will admit four new members, and which intends to broaden its cooperation based on partnership with the world's other regions as well. I am speaking for a Europe that is committed to world peace and development and whose political actions are determined by its belief in individual freedom, democracy and the rule of law, a Europe which sees in the realization of justice a crucial precondition for avoiding war and the use of force and which is prepared to play its part in promoting the economic development of all regions, the struggle against hunger, and measures to protect the Earth's natural sources of life. But I am speaking above all on behalf of a Europe that wishes to place the United Nations in a better position to meet its foremost obligation as guarantor of peace and security in the world.

Next year's fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations coincides with that marking the end of the Second World War. The founding of the United Nations was the response to that catastrophe, which had its origins in Europe. Today we can look back on impressive achievements by the United Nations. The 51 members in 1945 have grown into a membership of 184. The United Nations has thus developed into a truly universal Organization.

By recently concluding the negotiations on the Law of the Sea Convention, the United Nations has made outstanding progress in promoting the reconciliation of interests and the peaceful settlement of disputes around the world. The choice of Hamburg as seat of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea is a token of confidence in Germany and an obligation for my country.

The achievements of the United Nations are considerable, yet it is often the object of unfair criticism. The United Nations can be only as good as its Members allow it to be. It needs their active support. Many of its personnel, both soldiers and civilians, have done their utmost to help alleviate distress and save lives. No small number of them have lost their own lives in the process. We pay tribute to them and honour their memory.

Mr. Abu Salih (Sudan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Many of us believed that the ending of the cold war would usher in an era of peace. Today we know, unfortunately, that that hope was premature. Day in and day out, hundreds of people are falling victim to hostilities and thousands more are dying of starvation or disease. What has happened and is still happening in Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda is appalling.

The European Union sees a response to these global challenges in a strengthening of the United Nations and of the multilateral system for the safeguarding of peace world wide, in more intensive preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention within the United Nations and regional institutions, in respect for human rights in the world and for the rule of law, and in closer development cooperation in and among the regions.

We Europeans therefore welcome the report of the Secretary-General on an Agenda for Development. An Agenda for Development must soon find its place alongside the Agenda for Peace. With his report, Mr. Boutros-Ghali has again pointed the way for our Organization's future development and work. I wish to convey to him the appreciation of the European Union. We pledge a constructive contribution to the debate on this document.

Following the disaster of the Second World War, Europe had the opportunity for political renewal and it took that opportunity. We Europeans derive courage and strength from that renewal. No other region in the world has such a dense network of regional, intergovernmental and supranational institutions, and no region in the world has such close relations with other nations and their organizations. In the field of security, therefore, it is our aim to create a network of mutually supporting institutions which will include, together with the European Union (EU), the Western European Union (WEU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). All must work closely with the United Nations. NATO and the WEU are already helping the United Nations to carry out its difficult mission in the former Yugoslavia.

Because our interests are interwoven as they have always been, we will not allow ourselves to be discouraged by set-backs and will therefore do our utmost to bring about a peaceful settlement in the former Yugoslavia. The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) has our unreserved support. The terrible war of destruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina must be brought to an end. Federation is, we believe, a first and indispensable step towards a peace settlement. Winter will be here soon and the people will once again have cold and hunger to contend with. But the precondition for lasting progress and for peace is the will for reconciliation among all ethnic groups. The European Union is trying to help, and we shall continue to do so. For that reason we have established an administrative office in Mostar, which began its work in July under the courageous leadership of Hans Koschnick.

The entire international community must constantly make it unmistakably clear to the Bosnian Serbs that in rejecting the peace plan they cannot reckon with tacit approval. There must be no toleration of a policy of war and expulsion. We seek a solution for the Croatian territories under UNPROFOR protection which will be acceptable to both sides. The territorial integrity of Croatia must be respected. Autonomy arrangements will have to be found for the Krajina Serbs. We Europeans believe that an extension of the mandate of UNPROFOR is absolutely essential for this purpose.

The United Nations envisages a world in which it is not the law of the strongest but rather international law that prevails. We Europeans share that vision. We are even more convinced by what has happened in the former Yugoslavia that a relapse into divisive nationalism must be prevented.

We, the Members of the United Nations, must summon the strength to make a great joint effort to provide the United Nations and its Secretary-General with the means to meet their global responsibility. The United Nations must become what its founding fathers aspired to in their noble vision nearly 50 years ago: mankind's principal guardian of the peace.

But we, the Members of the United Nations, must above all be prepared to stand up for the cause of peace. The members of the European Union have played, and are continuing to play, a major role in helping maintain or restore peace in many of the world's trouble spots on behalf of the United Nations. We Europeans are guided by the following basic principles.

First, for its peace-keeping measures the United Nations should be able to rely on the broadest possible support and involvement of its Members. Such operations ought to foster peace and unity among them but not divide the community of nations.

Secondly, we Europeans will always be in favour of giving priority to non-military means of safeguarding peace wherever possible. But aggressors must also realize that the United Nations is capable of military intervention where other means of achieving the aims of the Charter have failed, and that it has the will to take such action.

Thirdly, the use of military force cannot be an end in itself. Successful peace-keeping presupposes an unequivocal mandate based on international law, a convincing political plan for settling the conflict, and the equitable participation of the Member States.

Fourthly, we Europeans welcome the idea of stand-by arrangements developed by Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali. It can effectively help reduce the length of time between the decision to mount a peace-keeping operation and its actual implementation. Many members of the European Union, including Germany, are willing to contribute to stand-by arrangements.

Fifthly, in many countries military training is geared solely to the traditional duties of the army. The specific tasks of peace-keeping require a completely different kind of training. The national preparation of Blue Helmets needs to be coordinated to a greater degree by the United Nations. What is needed for this are common training guidelines and the training capacity of the United Nations. Joint training and exercises are, at the same time, important steps in confidence-building.

Speaking as the Foreign Minister of Germany, I would add that last year I stated in the Assembly that my country was willing to shoulder more responsibilities with regard to United Nations peace-keeping operations. Today I can confirm that Germany will be able to join fully in peace-keeping operations of the United Nations, the German Federal Constitutional Court having cleared the way a few months ago.

The European Union looks for the revitalization of the United Nations and its various organizations. In the course of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly a working group considered all aspects of the question of increasing the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council. The working group had a substantive and constructive discussion. Its report states that

> "... while there was convergence of views that the membership of the Security Council should be enlarged, there was also agreement that the scope and nature of such enlargement require further discussion." *(A/48/47, para. 8)*

Security Council reform is an important issue which requires a productive outcome. These days, the most important decisions on security and peace are made in the Security Council. We therefore look forward to a report on enlargement of the Security Council membership and related issues from the open-ended working group, and to productive results.

Transparency in the Council's decision-making processes is important, particularly in peace-keeping, where the interests of contributor nations are involved. Indeed, the cost of establishing and consolidating peace is enormous. The explosion of the peace-keeping budget has almost brought the United Nations to a standstill. In order to overcome the financial crisis, three tasks must be accomplished.

The United Nations urgently requires more efficient management and better organization. The creation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session was an important step towards this objective, and the fact that a German has been appointed as the first head of that Office is a mark of confidence in my country. Members' contributions must be brought more into line with their actual capacity to pay. The aim of comprehensive financial reform must be to establish a scale that is transparent and reliable, reflects Members' financial situations, is automatically adapted to changed national circumstances, and gives consideration to the needs of countries with low per capita incomes. But it is crucial that all Members be willing to meet their membership obligations. We cannot have a situation in which the United Nations has difficulty carrying out its responsibilities because individual Members feel exempted from their duties.

It is always better to prevent a fire than to have to put it out. The European experience is that conflicts must be prevented -but this is not a purely European experience. We bank on the power of preventive diplomacy, confidence-building and the early detection of conflicts. The United Nations must further enlarge and strengthen its instruments of preventive diplomacy. This includes helping countries along the road to democracy and observing elections. The establishment of and respect for human and minority rights, as well as measures to bring about economic and social stability, are other basic elements of prevention.

The Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna calls for more active implementation. Our priority must be to support the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In addition, we must substantially increase the resources available in the United Nations for human rights activities. It is, I believe, inadequate for the United Nations to provide only 1 per cent of its funds for this task.

Work on the establishment of an international criminal court must proceed apace. Human rights and the protection of minorities are indivisibly linked. Ethnic or cultural arrogance and the curtailing of minority rights are one cause of the ever-swelling refugee flows in our world today. That is why minorities need the protection of the United Nations. We Europeans are striving to implement this objective. In Europe, the Pact on Stability is designed to promote political stability and the protection of minorities.

We do not want to close our eyes to our own shortcomings. There must be no room for racism and xenophobia in Europe. That is why we have made it our goal to develop a Union-wide strategy against racism and xenophobia in the course of the coming year. We need more efficient management of humanitarian relief actions. The need for resources and measures to alleviate emergency situations through disaster relief operations is likely to increase rather than decrease.

We expect the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator to ensure more effective coordination of measures within the United Nations system. He must be able to intervene before it is too late for the people affected. I should like to stress that point. Work on the drafting of a convention for the protection of the work of humanitarian organizations must be brought to a speedy conclusion.

One task of preventive policy as we understand it is to combat terrorism. There is no justification for terrorism. Drugs and organized crime are an ever-increasing danger not only to our young people, but also to the social and political stability of whole societies. To combat these dangers we need international alliances, and we need them urgently. The European Union offers comprehensive cooperation and the experience it has gained in this field.

Disarmament policy, too, is preventive policy. Over the past few years, major successes have been attained in this field. These must now be made irreversible. The START Treaties must be implemented quickly. In Europe, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces has proved to be a milestone.

Uncleared mines are amongst the worst legacies of war and civil war. We Europeans are in favour of the establishment of a United Nations fund for mine-clearing and of more stringent provisions under international law to protect civilian populations.

The increasing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the continuing operation of unsafe nuclear plants and the smuggling of plutonium and other nuclear materials are among the new global dangers of our age. We must counter them at the national and global levels. We Europeans urgently appeal to North Korea to fulfil its international obligations. We in the European Union are committed to the indefinite, unconditional extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In Geneva, we want to arrive at a universal and universally verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. I believe that it is also high time that consensus was reached there on negotiations to bring about a ban on the manufacture of weapons-grade fissile material.

The European Union, together with its partners, is providing considerable funds for improving the safety of nuclear plants in the neighbouring countries to our east. What happened at Chernobyl must never, ever be repeated. That would indeed be terrible.

I appeal to all signatory States to ensure speedy ratification and implementation of the chemical weapons Convention at the national level in order for it quickly to become fully effective.

The dangers I have just mentioned affect us all. As those dangers have a global dimension, action by the United Nations, too, is called for. At its summit meeting on 31 January 1992, the Security Council rightly stated that the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security. The United Nations, the Security Council and all of us must resolutely shoulder our responsibility to overcome these new threats.

A fair balancing of interests through the ever-closer regional integration of States and ever-increasing cooperation between regions of our planet in the spirit of Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations are the necessary response to the huge economic, ecological and social challenges and the manifold ethnic conflicts we are

facing today - unfortunately, I might add. No one region alone can master the global tasks confronting us. Nor can the United Nations accomplish everything itself. The burden on the United Nations can be substantially reduced with the help of regional associations and cooperation. We should strive to achieve that objective.

For Europe, the post-war era has finally reached an end. A few weeks ago, the last Russian soldiers left Germany. Russian troops have also withdrawn from the Baltic States and other Eastern European countries. Now the aim must be to prevent new divides from emerging in Europe. The European Union will become not a "Fortress Europe" but a Europe based on partnership and solidarity.

The European Union is supporting the countries of Central and Eastern Europe on their way to democracy and the establishment of market economies. The peoples in the reformist States fought for their freedom. We encouraged them in their struggle and we will not now abandon them. We will gradually smooth their path towards the Euro-Atlantic institutions. It is important to mention that there will be no pan-European order of peace without or against Russia. The European Union has concluded partnership and cooperation agreements with Russia and Ukraine. The North Atlantic Alliance's "Partnership for Peace" enhances Europe's security.

The CSCE, as a new instrument of conflict-prevention, confidence-building and conflict resolution, can set an example for other regions of the world. And it can, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter, relieve the United Nations as the guardian of peace. At the CSCE Summit in December the European Union will urge, on the basis of a German-Dutch initiative, that the CSCE be given priority in conflict settlement and prevention within its area and that it be equipped accordingly.

The European Union wants to further extend and tighten its network of regional cooperation. Transatlantic relations with the United States and Canada remain the cornerstone of European policy. The Summit meeting between the European Union and the United States in Berlin in July this year confirmed our resolve to further strengthen transatlantic relations.

We are seeking closer relations with the countries of Asia. In Germany a few days ago we discussed with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) the possibilities for even more intensive political and economic cooperation. We are following with interest ASEAN's initiative to launch a policy dialogue on security in South-East and East Asia, and I wish to emphasize the European Union's interest in and willingness to cooperate more closely with the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC).

The European Council meeting in Corfu reaffirmed that it attaches great importance to relations with the countries of Latin America and with their regional associations. The institutionalized dialogue with the Rio Group has become for us an important element for the consolidation of democracy and peace. We intend to broaden the cooperation agreement with the States of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR).

Through its policy on the Mediterranean, the European Union will have made available a total of roughly $9.6 billion between 1975 and 1996. Europe attaches great importance to security in the Mediterranean.

From the outset the European Union actively supported the Middle East peace process, playing a leading role in international assistance for the development of the Palestinian economy and society. With the roughly $600 million earmarked for direct aid from 1994 to 1998, the European Union is the Palestinians' largest international donor.

Cooperation in southern Africa has made great strides. The course South Africa has embarked upon under Nelson Mandela shows that it is possible for former adversaries to be reconciled and to shape a common future, given the necessary political will and wise leadership. At the Berlin conference with the States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) early this month the European Union initiated a new phase of cooperation with southern Africa.

We in Europe want closer dialogue with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on conflict prevention and security cooperation because we want partnership with the countries of Africa and thereby a greater United Nations peace-keeping capacity.

Agreement on an agenda for development is becoming ever more urgent. One billion people in this world are still living in absolute poverty. Global expenditure on arms still amounts to as much as the income of half of the five and a half billion people on our planet.

Poverty, increasing demographic pressure and irresponsible harming of the environment have made the dangers to peace and stability greater, not smaller. The Conference on Environment and Development in Rio and the International Conference on Population and Development, which ended in Cairo a few days ago, confirmed that there are no simple answers to global problems. The two conferences none the less sent out an encouraging signal: there is growing recognition that we must tackle such problems together, and this I believe is a very important basis for the World Social Summit, which will be held next year in Denmark.

In many countries women are still excluded from active participation in public life. We expect the World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing next year, to heighten awareness of this.

In the Maastricht Treaty we Europeans for the first time made development policy an integral part of a treaty system for Europe. We undertook to seek the sustainable economic and social development of the South, to promote its integration into the global economy and to combat poverty.

Despite the huge budget difficulties facing its member States, the European Union has increased its development assistance from over $1 billion in 1988 to almost $3 billion today. Funds for emergency disaster relief and food aid were increased to $1 billion this year. Even more important than such financial transfers, however, is the task of integrating the countries of the South into the world economy. Without doubt, the conclusion of the Uruguay Round improved the chances of growth for all States participating in world trade. The aim now must be for the Treaty to enter into force on 1 January 1995, as planned, and for the newly-established World Trade Organization to commence work.

The treaty-based cooperation between the European Union and the other regions of the world is designed to further liberalize world trade. Every region should be able to participate in the European market. That is why we want to complete the forthcoming review of Lomé IV, including the new finance protocol, on time, and we are working to achieve that end.

Speaking here last year I suggested the development of an early detection capacity for environmental disasters in developing countries, and for the European Union I can today say this: World-wide energy consumption is increasing, although the use of fossil fuels is already endangering climatic stability. In particular, we, the industrialized countries, therefore need a more environment-friendly and resource-friendly attitude on the part of producers and consumers and increased recycling of raw materials. Reducing carbon dioxide emissions must be tackled as a matter of urgency.

The destruction of the forests continues mercilessly. Soil erosion, loss of bio-diversity and impaired regeneration are the consequences. This destruction must be halted. We Europeans will seek better international cooperation in the United Nations for the sustainable utilization and protection of the forests. The United Nations is the guardian not only of peace, but also of the environment.

The historian Arnold Toynbee was right when he concluded that people are entirely capable of learning from disasters and finding responses to historic challenges. Today we Europeans know that only integration and cooperation lead to the desired goal, and the international community's response to the global problems is and has to be to strengthen the United Nations. Our central tasks for the future are: first, to secure peace world-wide; secondly, to respect human rights and the rule of law; and, thirdly, to create the conditions for lasting stability through economic and social development.

Our common goal is to create a better world for all. But the determination with which we implement this goal in practice is the precondition for success against which we will be measured.

The President *(interpretation from Arabic)*: I now call upon the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Mr. Hans Van Mierlo.

Mr. Van Mierlo (Netherlands): First of all, I should like to extend congratulations to the President on his election.

My colleague Foreign Minister Kinkel, on behalf of the European Union, has just given a broad overview of our approach to the United Nations. The great challenges which the United Nations faces today are well summarized in his statement.

The idea that the world is divided into a North and a South with greatly diverging interests is being replaced by a growing awareness that the fundamental problems we face are common, global problems - to ensure

sustainable development, to protect our environment, to solve the population problem, to prevent social disintegration, to uphold justice and to protect the dignity of the human person.

The United Nations will have to play a central role in our common efforts to find answers to these global problems. There is a need for coherent, integrated policies for problems which have so far been treated largely as separate questions - problems of peace and security, development, trade, democracy and human rights, the environment. The United Nations "Agenda for Peace" and its agenda for development are closely connected.

By building on its comparative advantages the United Nations can play its role as the primary institution for global international cooperation which is envisaged in its Charter. We, the Member States, will have to enable the United Nations to do so.

Are we really providing this body with the necessary means to live up to expectations? It has become fashionable, when expectations are not met, to blame shortcomings on the United Nations itself. I tend to take a different view. Member States are to be blamed at least as much as the Organization which struggles as our faithful servant. Rather than making the United Nations our scapegoat, Member States have first of all to make an honest and serious effort, through timely and full payment of financial contributions, to provide it with the means to play the role we expect it to play.

But we need a change in attitude as well. As inhabitants of the global village, we can no longer remain indifferent to the fate of our fellow human beings, even if they live on a different continent. CNN brings their problems right into our living rooms, visible, immediate, inescapable. Rwanda, Haiti and former Yugoslavia, Goma and Vukovar - tragedies such as these touch the conscience of citizens in all parts of the globe.

How do we respond to this? The prerequisites for successful action by the United Nations are credibility and legitimacy. To put it differently: the United Nations must become an institution in which all peoples of the world are fairly represented and have a fair say in decision-making. There must be a balance between burdens and benefits for all and, most importantly, there must be an awareness at the level of both Governments and individuals that the United Nations can make a difference.

The paradox is that the distance between decision-makers and those represented seems to grow, in spite of the increase in the speed and volume of communications. This does not affect solely the credibility - and therefore the legitimacy - of the United Nations. The credibility of State structures at the national level is equally at stake.

Everywhere in the world, including in what used to be called the first, the second and the third worlds, we see a profound cynicism about government and Governments. This is partly due to the fact that certain expectations cannot any longer be met. The power of Governments has been diminished because many important activities, especially in the economic sphere, have moved from Government into private or corporate hands. They are not quite outside the sphere of direct action of Governments and, for that matter, of the United Nations.

However, a substantial part of this widespread cynicism stems from the perception of a lack of common decency, from the feeling that Governments and institutions work for their own good in the first place and that the interest of the people whom they are supposed to serve comes second.

In this respect I think we can take heart from the success of the International Conference on Population and Development held recently at Cairo. That success was built on a formula that essentially amounted to common decency, namely, to face the population problem not through coercion and discrimination but by giving people the means to follow, freely and responsibly, the path of their own choice. This should serve as an example for us as Governments with regard to other matters as well.

If we apply the criteria of fairness and decency to the United Nations, then it is clear that major adjustments are needed. In some fields work on this task has started and a number of preliminary steps have been taken - for instance, the appointment of an inspector general. We should not deceive ourselves, however, into believing that everything is therefore well. Good bookkeeping is essential, but fraud never constituted the core of the United Nations problem. Even good management, immensely important though it is, is only a necessary tool.

Let me mention some of my priorities for an agenda for a revitalized United Nations. The tremendous increase in peace-keeping operations clearly signals a change in the role of the Security Council. The emphasis

is more and more on cooperative crisis management, resolution and prevention in various regional conflicts. The permanent members of the Council are expected to take a leading role when countries are requested to contribute the means needed to implement the Council's decisions. In this new era the yardstick for great-Power status is no longer the number of nuclear bombs but now the concrete contribution that a country is prepared and able to make to the cooperative effort to stem the tide of war, misery and poverty in the world.

For this reason the Netherlands is in favour of the admission of Germany and Japan to the Security Council as permanent members. Both countries have an impeccable record as Members of the United Nations. They have expressed their willingness to shoulder a larger part of the common burden, and they have the power and the means to do so. Their permanent presence on the Security Council would therefore significantly strengthen the authority and capabilities of the United Nations as a whole. The question of equitable representation of various geographical regions will also have to be addressed for the sake of the Council's legitimacy in the eyes of the world at large. All in all, we believe that it is possible to achieve consensus on an expansion to a total number of seats somewhere in the low twenties. This would indeed be a most significant step towards improving the credibility and legitimacy of the United Nations.

At least as important however is enhanced transparency and closer coordination between the Security Council and the United Nations membership at large. My own country's position may illustrate this point. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is de facto the eleventh highest contributor to the budget of the United Nations. We are in tenth position in terms of the numbers of military personnel contributed to peace-keeping operations, yet we are not involved in the Council's decisions in which the mandates and modalities of these operations are laid down.

As in government, there should be no taxation without representation. The members of the Security Council have to remember that they exercise their authority on behalf of the entire membership of the Organization. For that purpose they need the confidence of the General Assembly. The Council can no longer operate as an exclusive club. Therefore the Netherlands is in favour of the creation of a subsidiary organ of the Council, where all aspects of peace-keeping operations could be discussed with major troop contributors.

Moreover, we join those who call for systematic and independent reporting and evaluation of peace-keeping operations. The reports should not end up, labelled "Confidential", in the desks of the United Nations bureaucracy. Those who contribute and the people whom they represent have a rightful claim to this information. On this score as well, the principle of accountability must urgently be introduced in the interest of the overall credibility of the United Nations.

Another area with important potential for improving the working of the United Nations system is that of the regional organizations. Together with Germany, the Netherlands has argued for a more active role for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as the regional United Nations arrangement for Europe. I strongly believe that the United Nations should apply what the European Union calls subsidiarity. This principle means that the higher level should not deal with matters that can be dealt with satisfactorily at the lower and more specialized level. Responsibility should be exercised as close as possible to the grass roots. European countries should try to solve their own problems in the framework of the CSCE before dropping them into the lap of the United Nations. This, however, remains a matter for voluntary regional cooperation, and in no way detracts from the primary responsibility of the Security Council.

In Africa, we see encouraging signs of a development in the same direction. In the framework of the Organization of African Unity, as well as at regional and subregional levels, efforts are being made to develop a regional peace-keeping capacity. These initiatives deserve our wholehearted support. On the other hand, the Netherlands shares the concern of these countries that self-reliance in this domain should not cut them off from assistance and active involvement by the international community through the United Nations.

In Rwanda, for instance, African countries are contributing most of the personnel for the operation of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). Other United Nations Members have provided equipment, logistical and financial support and transportation. The Netherlands has made a contribution in *matériel* to match the deployment of a peace-keeping contingent by Zambia. This may provide a model for more permanent, structural means of practical cooperation between countries in the region and those outside - a kind of mutual adoption arrangement.

Much has been said about the need for an enhanced early-warning capacity. In fact, in most cases the information was available before crises erupted into violence. But, as the former Yugoslavia has demonstrated, early warning is not sufficient if States are not willing and ready to undertake early action once a potential crisis has been identified.

A similar remark can be made about the United Nations system of stand-by forces. This is an excellent idea, and the system may serve as a useful database for the United Nations. But it is no guarantee of greater efficiency in all circumstances. In connection with Rwanda, the system was put to the test for the first time. The results of that test were extremely discouraging. None of the countries that had indicated possible contributions were willing to provide troops for rapid deployment. What is the use of an instrument if the political will to use it is lacking?

Regrettably, lessons are drawn mostly when it is too late. The human tragedy in Rwanda will always remain a shame for the international community. Collectively, we must acknowledge that we had ample warning of impending disaster and that we could have done more to prevent the genocide. In this context I have been struck by the words of a high-ranking United Nations official:

> "A mechanized brigade deployed in Kigali within 7 to 14 days might have stabilized the situation."

If this is true, then the moral dimension of our failure to provide the United Nations with the necessary means becomes all too apparent. If deploying a brigade could have prevented the indiscriminate slaughter of many hundreds of thousands, what prevented us from doing so?

Let us face it: the reason for our inaction was neither lack of means nor lack of time. The reason was that, under the circumstances, no Government was prepared to risk the lives of its citizens. The physical danger was considered too high.

How can we resolve this dilemma? Hand-wringing will not absolve us from our responsibility in a situation of genocide. Either we act upon our feeling of horror and indignation, or we stop moralizing. If Member States are not in a position to provide the necessary military personnel, will it then not become unavoidable for us to consider the establishment of a full-time, professional, at all times available and rapidly deployable United Nations brigade for this purpose - a "United Nations Legion" at the disposal of the Security Council? Such a relatively small, international, all-volunteer "fire brigade" may enable the United Nations to save lives in situations such as Rwanda. Its establishment could help to solve the dilemmas that we, Governments, face when trying to come to grips with the phenomenon of the failed State.

Of course, the preferable way to deal with conflicts is by preventing them. In Europe, the discreet activities of the High Commissioner for National Minorities appointed by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and those of other actors, have undoubtedly played a crucial role in defusing potential crises in the Baltic and other regions. It is a fact of life in politics that solutions and happy endings quietly achieved do not attract the same attention as failures and disasters. Trusted and respected personalities could play a similar role in other regions. As Minister Hurd said last year: for the expense involved in the deployment of one battalion of peace-keepers, the Secretary-General can send a great many personal representatives.

I also wish to say a few words about the aftermath of conflicts that could not be prevented: the punishment of those responsible for crimes against humanity. It is of the utmost importance not only that these terrible crimes be condemned by the international community but also that those responsible for these crimes, as well as the actual perpetrators, be prosecuted. Strangely enough, this was done only at the end of the Second World War. But now at last we see the establishment of an international tribunal for crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and the start of a broad discussion on a future tribunal for Rwanda.

Punishment of war criminals and ethnic cleansers is not a matter of revenge. It is a matter of justice and also a matter of deterrence. Impunity encourages future crimes against humanity. We therefore strongly support both tribunals; as well as the early establishment of an international criminal court that will exercise jurisdiction with regard to serious crimes of international concern. With the introduction of a draft statute for such an international criminal court, a major step forward has been made.

In closing, let me emphasize my fundamental point: the credibility of the authority exercised by Governments and by the United Nations. In the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere, the world community has failed to stop the breakdown of civil society and the descent into barbarity. Such failures undermine people's belief in the authority

of the United Nations, in the authority of regional organizations, in the authority of Governments, and indeed in public authority as such. The authority of a national Government does not depend only on its own credibility; it also depends on the credibility of the wider international authority in which it participates. Therefore, it is in our own national interest to uphold that wider authority. We can only do this if we provide the United Nations with the tools it needs to face its daunting task.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, His Excellency Mr. Andrzej Olechowski.

Mr. Olechowski (Poland): Let me express my great pleasure at seeing Mr. Amara Essy presiding over our deliberations. I am confident that, given his experience and skills, this session will contribute to the further enhancement of the role of the United Nations. Let me also thank the Secretary-General for the thoughtful and thorough review of the world situation, given in his annual report - this in addition, of course, to our thanks for his tireless work for the good of the Organization.

I would like to follow the point made by our Dutch colleague regarding the increased responsibility of individual Member States for the success of this institution, let me say that the end of the cold war has been a source of and a sound reason for satisfaction throughout the entire world community. A series of "velvet revolutions" in Central Europe, the dissolution of the USSR and remarkable events in South Africa and the Middle East have shaken the entire post-war geopolitical pattern of "negative stability" - frozen enmity. As expected, the end of the East-West confrontation and the disappearance of competing blocs has proved beneficial to international relations. The planet has become a safer place. Yet the euphoria is fading, giving way to a sober evaluation of events. Indeed, have all the "Berlin Walls" or "Iron Curtains" been dismantled - especially economic barriers that separate countries on a global or regional scale? Is the "peace dividend" actually being paid? Has the North-South development gap ceased to widen and to undermine the newly acquired, still fragile global stability?

The old bipolar, confrontational world has gone. We are not divided anymore. But we are not united either. In fact, many problems, dormant or concealed until now, have surfaced with startling force: ethnic conflicts, nationalisms, religious intolerance. The "cold war" may very well be replaced by a "cold peace" or, even worse, by "hot chaos".

Global cooperation will not come by itself. The United Nations is best placed to lead its Members in an effort to achieve it. However, are the nations ready for it? Is the United Nations properly equipped to cope with the task?

The question that should be asked first is not what the United Nations could do for us, but what we - the Member States - should do to unite the nations. A contest between the two super-Powers no longer dictates the course of history. The international scene, both political and economic, has become pluralist, with medium-sized and small countries emerging as increasingly important actors. Previously, the role of these countries was, at best, that of a go-between or observer, rather than an active participant. Now they are becoming partners in the multi-country discourse. Multilateralism is becoming more important than ever. Multilateral arrangements in various domains provide both insurance of equal treatment and an opportunity to take part, to contribute. Multilateralism increases the freedom of action of individual States and the degree of their responsibility.

Let me set forth briefly the way in which Poland, a medium-sized country, perceives its role and duty - I stress duty - as a partner in the international effort to bring about global cooperation, to build a united world.

First, we develop friendly relations with neighbours. The best testimony in this regard is found in the treaties we have concluded with all our seven neighbours. We regard those treaties as a great common accomplishment by Poles, Belarusians, Czechs, Germans, Lithuanians, Russians, Slovaks and Ukrainians. It was not always easy to reach an agreement: hard diplomatic work, imagination and willingness to compromise were required, to say the least. But the result was very much worth the effort. The treaties constitute a solid block of durable rules based on international law, in a region of major importance for the security of the continent and the world at large.

Secondly, we are active in developing regional cooperation. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland have formed a non-binding structure known as the Visegrad group. It is not an organization; it has no permanent bodies, not even a secretariat - a true rarity for any international venture. The group did, however, manage to work out a Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA).

Poland is also a partner in the Central European Initiative and the Council of the Baltic Sea States. Furthermore, we have recently reached out to our eastern neighbours with a number of proposals to enhance regional links.

Thirdly, we are impatiently and insistently striving to become members of institutions whose membership has been determined by the logic of the divided world. We all agree they must not remain exclusive. It is "one Europe, one world" that lies behind Poland's efforts to join the European Union, the Western European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It was in this context that Poland responded with determination and confidence to the Partnership for Peace programme. By virtue of its history, size and vital interests, Poland wants to enter NATO not as a front-line State but, rather, as a country furthering cooperation. We do not want to create new divisions. On the contrary, we are striving to overcome the remnants of the past divisions which are still with us. It was also in this context that Poland entered into the association agreement with the European Union, and it is in this context that Poland is actively preparing for membership. It is our strong desire to take part in the process of integrating Europe so that it becomes more secure, cooperative and hospitable; and to participate in an effort to overcome the irrationalities of history - rivalry, imperial divisions and nationalistic stereotypes.

Fourthly, Poland is a strong believer and a dedicated participant in interregional and global actions. We are in the forefront in promoting cooperation within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The CSCE is not only the symbol of the necessary bonds of security but also a forum for practical cooperation across three continents. We support the CSCE as a regional arrangement within Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

Poland is a time-tested participant in United Nations peace-keeping operations. Over 2,000 of our troops are there to uphold the ideas in the Charter, whenever called to duty by the Security Council.

Poland, finally, is also active in other areas of international cooperation: in the economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields as well as in the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms as stipulated by Article 13 of the Charter.

Medium- and small-sized States are potentially a great asset of the United Nations; it has not so far been sufficiently recognized, let alone utilized. States such as Poland can play a stabilizing role and exert an important beneficial influence on developments in their immediate and more distant neighbourhood, and tangibly contribute to global stability and security. In particular, they can be expected to become nuclei of regional integration as they should not be suspected of seeking to dominate or to impose their will on others.

To act locally - that is, regionally - is practical and effective. Medium-sized countries in consensus with smaller States can, indeed, make a difference. However, we should not allow a loose constellation of separate villages to emerge. We need a global, united village. Therefore, we need a framework for subregional, regional and interregional cooperation and discipline to ensure coherence. This is of course the *raison d'être* of the United Nations. We are trying today to improve its operations. Let me here draw attention to two specific issues.

First, the fundamental task for the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security. The role of the Security Council has been in recent years broadened by more frequent recourse to action under Chapter VII of the Charter. On the one hand, that allows for a fresh look at the security role of the United Nations, particularly in the context of countries which do not enjoy sound security guarantees. On the other hand, one cannot remain indifferent to the Council's decisions in cases where sovereignty, democracy and human rights are violated, or access to humanitarian assistance is hindered. For this reason, Poland consistently makes an effort to respond to the Council's calls for action, be it in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda or, most recently, Haiti.

Poland shares the view that the increase in the membership of the United Nations justifies the enlargement of the Council. There are different suggestions and ideas as to how this might best be done. The principal criterion continues, for us, to be preservation of the effectiveness of the Council. Enlargement should be accomplished on a consensus basis and as a package. The interests of all United Nations regional groups need to be respected in the process. A seat on the Council, permanent or not, cannot be considered a matter of prestige. Indeed, it implies increased responsibility and the ability to discharge it.

The Council's decisions involving peace-keeping and peace-enforcement measures, from sanctions to recourse

to force, give rise to various risks and sacrifices by third countries. They include potential risk to the lives and health of the troops and financial losses for which so far, despite the provisions of Article 50, there is no adequate compensation.

The security of the peace-keepers is of the utmost importance. Work undertaken on a convention on the safety of United Nations peace-keeping personnel should be completed at the earliest date. There is also a need for active dialogue between members of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and troop-contributing States. Such dialogue should be a standard practice in the case of decisions which may affect the security of these troops.

Poland shares the view that: first, all United Nations activities in the four fields - preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building - must be fully mandated and better planned, organized and financed; secondly, regional organizations should make a more significant contribution in the areas of preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping, but one fully consistent with the United Nations Charter; and, thirdly, a specific mandate is to be sought when peace-keeping troops need to use force beyond the requirements of self-defence.

Disarmament is yet another dimension of a global effort to strengthen international peace and security. Mankind is no longer held hostage to nuclear confrontation; the nuclear arms race has been halted and, it is hoped, reversed. Post-cold-war cooperation between erstwhile adversaries has resulted in important nuclear disarmament accords. Poland is playing an active part in the ongoing multilateral negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva for a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. Internationally verifiable, universally adhered to and effective, such a treaty would put in place yet another barrier to the spread of nuclear arms, which is in the vital security interests of each and every member of the family of nations. These interests would also be served by a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices. The window of opportunity is wide open. It must not be ignored. We warmly welcome the renewed interest and initiative on nuclear disarmament submitted yesterday to this Assembly by President Clinton and President Yeltsin.

We believe that further reinforcement of the non-proliferation regime is imperative. We are alarmed by recent reports of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials across frontiers. This is a threat to international security and also a danger to innocent bystanders exposed to radiation. It also casts doubts on the efficiency and sufficiency of existing legal provisions and procedures. A thorough review of such provisions and procedures seems timely.

The overriding national security interests of States would be served in particular by the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We welcome the recent accessions to the NPT, especially by some of our newly independent neighbours. We fervently hope that Ukraine will soon follow suit. In this connection, I wish to recall that Poland firmly supports the unconditional and indefinite extension of the NPT. The forthcoming Conference to review the operation of the NPT and to decide on its extension should strengthen the regime. It will benefit the entire international community. Coming as an aftermath to both Hiroshima and Chernobyl, it would be the most fitting step to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the nuclear age.

With the signing of the chemical weapons Convention, there is a prospect of finally eliminating another category of weapons of mass destruction. Poland is actively involved in the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and its ratification procedure is well advanced.

In conclusion, I would say this: more power to the regions; more authority to the Security Council; more initiative and involvement on the part of medium-sized countries. These are, in our view, the cornerstones and objectives of the reform of the United Nations.

Allow me now to address an issue to which Poland and a number of other countries attach particular importance. I am referring to the provisions of Article 107 and to parts of Article 53 of the Charter of the United Nations. I doubt that there is any delegation here that would not agree that they have become obsolete - a dead letter.

For almost 50 years these provisions have not been officially invoked. Indeed, the States covered by this so-called "enemy clause" have become not only an inseparable part of the democratic world but also a crucial element of the United Nations system. It is impossible to imagine how the Organization and its

system could function without their political, economic and financial commitment.

Poland, the victim of the Nazi aggression that started the Second World War, considers it its moral duty to take a lead in closing this chapter of history for all time. We believe that the time has come to part with transitional clauses born of the war, concerning States which were then, 50 years ago, enemies, but which have now become partners in our common work for the United Nations.

I formally propose the removal from the Charter of the United Nations of the clauses referring to "enemy States".

A political decision by the General Assembly on this matter could be taken at this session. While, of course, other modalities may be considered, the Assembly could, for instance, request the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations to submit to it at its fiftieth session a proposal for an appropriate legal solution that would not amount to a substantive revision of the Charter.

Let me express the hope that this initiative will meet with the unanimous support of the Member States.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.